

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA
EASTERN DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

KENT RAYMOND PLATTER,

Defendant.

No. CR 06-2012-LRR

FINAL JURY INSTRUCTIONS

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury:

The instructions I gave you at the beginning of the trial and during the trial remain in effect. I will now give you some additional instructions.

You must, of course, continue to follow the instructions I gave you earlier, as well as those I give you now. You must not single out some instructions and ignore others, because all are important. This is true even though some of those I gave you at the beginning of and during trial are not repeated here.

The instructions I am about to give you now are in writing and will be available to you in the jury room. I emphasize, however, that this does not mean they are more important than my earlier instructions. Again, all instructions, whenever given and whether in writing or not, must be followed.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

In considering these instructions, attach no importance or significance whatsoever to the order in which they are given.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

Neither in these instructions nor in any ruling, action or remark that I have made during this trial have I intended to give any opinion or suggestion as to what the facts are or what your verdict should be.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

It is your duty to find from the evidence what the facts are. You will then apply the law, as I give it to you, to those facts. You must follow my instructions on the law, even if you thought the law was different or should be different.

Do not allow sympathy or prejudice to influence you. The law demands of you a just verdict, unaffected by anything except the evidence, your common sense and the law as I give it to you.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

I have mentioned the word “evidence.” The “evidence” in this case consists of the following: the testimony of the witnesses, stipulations of the parties, and the documents and other things received as exhibits.

You may use reason and common sense to draw deductions or conclusions from facts which have been established by the evidence in the case.

Certain things are not evidence. I shall list those things again for you now:

1. Statements, arguments, questions and comments by the lawyers are not evidence.
2. Anything that might have been said by jurors or the attorneys during the jury selection process is not evidence.
3. Objections are not evidence. The parties have a right to object when they believe something is improper. You should not be influenced by the objection. If I sustained an objection to a question, you must ignore the question and must not try to guess what the answer might have been.
4. Testimony that I struck from the record, or told you to disregard, is not evidence and must not be considered.
5. Anything you saw or heard about this case outside the courtroom is not evidence.

During the trial, documents were referred to but they were not admitted into evidence and, therefore, they will not be available to you in the jury room during deliberations.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

There are two types of evidence from which a jury may properly find the truth as to the facts of a case: direct evidence and circumstantial evidence. Direct evidence is the evidence of the witnesses to a fact or facts of which they have knowledge by means of their senses. The other is circumstantial evidence—the proof of a chain of circumstances pointing to the existence or nonexistence of certain facts. The law makes no distinction between direct and circumstantial evidence. You should give all evidence the weight and value you believe it is entitled to receive.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

The jurors are the sole judges of the weight and credibility of the testimony and the value to be given to each witness who has testified in this case. In deciding what the facts are, you may have to decide what testimony you believe and what testimony you do not believe. You may believe all of what a witness said, or only part of it, or none of it.

In deciding what testimony to believe, consider the witness's intelligence, the opportunity the witness had to have seen or heard the things testified about, the witness's memory, any motives that witness may have for testifying a certain way, the manner of the witness while testifying, whether that witness said something different at an earlier time, the general reasonableness of the testimony and the extent to which the testimony is consistent with any evidence that you believe.

In deciding whether or not to believe a witness, keep in mind that people sometimes hear or see things differently and sometimes forget things. You need to consider, therefore, whether a contradiction is an innocent misrecollection, a lapse of memory, or an intentional falsehood, and that may depend on whether it has to do with an important fact or only a small detail.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

In a previous instruction, I instructed you generally on the credibility of witnesses. I now give you this further instruction on how the credibility of a witness can be “impeached” and how you are to consider the testimony of certain witnesses.

A witness may be discredited or impeached by contradictory evidence; by showing that the witness testified falsely concerning a material matter; by showing the witness has a motive to be untruthful; or by evidence that at some other time the witness has said or done something, or has failed to say or do something, that is inconsistent with the witness’s present testimony.

You have heard evidence that the witness Timothy Platter was once convicted of a crime. You may use that evidence only to help you decide whether to believe that witness and how much weight to give his testimony.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

The government and the defendant have stipulated – that is, they have agreed – that certain facts are as they have stated. You must therefore treat those facts as having been proved.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

You have heard testimony from persons described as experts. A person who, by knowledge, skill, training, education or experience, has become an expert in some field may state his opinions on matters in that field and may also state the reasons for his opinion.

Expert testimony should be considered just like any other testimony. You may accept or reject it, and give it as much weight as you think it deserves, considering the witness's education and experience, the soundness of the reasons given for the opinion, the acceptability of the methods used and all the other evidence in the case.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

The Indictment in this case charges the defendant with one criminal offense:

The Indictment charges that, on or about December 22, 2005, the defendant knowingly possessed, in and affecting commerce, one or more firearms after having been previously convicted of a felony, that is, a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year, and while being an unlawful user of a controlled substance, that is, marijuana.

The defendant has pleaded not guilty to the offense.

As I told you at the beginning of the trial, an Indictment is simply an accusation. It is not evidence of anything. To the contrary, the defendant is presumed to be innocent. Thus the defendant, even though charged, begins the trial with no evidence against him. The presumption of innocence alone is sufficient to find the defendant not guilty and can be overcome only if the government proves, beyond a reasonable doubt, each essential element of the criminal offense charged.

There is no burden upon the defendant to prove that he is innocent. Accordingly, the fact that the defendant did not testify must not be considered by you in any way, or even discussed, in arriving at your verdict.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER ____

The Indictment charges the defendant with being a felon in possession of a firearm and being an unlawful user of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm. You may find the defendant guilty under one or both of the following alternative theories: (1) possession of a firearm after having been convicted of a felony; and/or (2) possession of a firearm while being an unlawful user of a controlled substance. The government need only prove one of these theories beyond a reasonable doubt for you to find the defendant guilty of the criminal offense charged in the Indictment, but you must unanimously agree which theory the government has proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

***Alternative I: Possession of a Firearm After Having Been
Convicted of a Felony***

The offense of being a felon in possession of a firearm has three essential elements, which are:

- One,* the defendant has been convicted of a crime punishable by a term of imprisonment exceeding one year;
- Two,* the defendant knowingly possessed one or more firearms, that is,
 - (1) a Marlin, Model 60, .22 caliber rifle, bearing serial number 13429138; and/or
 - (2) a New England Arms Company, Model SB1, 20 gauge shotgun, bearing serial number NK425469; and
- Three,* the firearm or firearms were transported across a state line at some time before the defendant's possession of them.

(CONTINUED)

INSTRUCTION NUMBER ____ (Cont'd)

You are instructed that the government and the defendant have stipulated, that is, agreed, that the defendant has been convicted of a crime punishable by imprisonment for more than one year under the laws of the State of Iowa, and you must consider the first essential element as proven.

You are instructed that the government and the defendant have stipulated, that is, agreed, that the firearms in question were transported across a state line, and you must consider the third essential element as proven.

To find the defendant guilty of being a felon in possession of a firearm, the government must prove all of these essential elements beyond a reasonable doubt. If the government failed to prove any essential element beyond a reasonable doubt, then you must find the defendant not guilty of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

***Alternative II: Possession of a Firearm While Being an Unlawful
User of a Controlled Substance***

The crime of being an unlawful user of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm has three essential elements, which are:

- One,* the defendant was an unlawful user of a controlled substance, that is, marijuana;
- Two,* the defendant thereafter knowingly possessed one or more firearms, that is,
 - (1) a Marlin, Model 60, .22 caliber rifle, bearing serial number 13429138; and/or

(CONTINUED)

INSTRUCTION NUMBER ____ (Cont'd)

(2) a New England Arms Company, Model SB1, 20 gauge shotgun, bearing serial number NK425469;

while he was an unlawful user of a controlled substance; and

Three, the firearm or firearms were transported across a state line at some time before the defendant's possession of them.

You are instructed that the government and the defendant have stipulated, that is, agreed, that the firearms in question were transported across a state line, and you must consider the third essential element as proven.

The term "unlawful user of a controlled substance" means a person who uses a controlled substance in a manner other than as prescribed by a licensed physician. The defendant must have been actively engaged in the use of a controlled substance during the period of time he possessed the firearm, but the law does not require that he use the controlled substance at the precise time he possessed the firearm. An inference that a person was a user of a controlled substance may be drawn from evidence of a pattern of use or possession of a controlled substance that reasonably covers the time the firearm was possessed.

To find the defendant guilty of being a drug user in possession of a firearm, the government must prove all of these essential elements beyond a reasonable doubt. If the government failed to prove any essential element beyond a reasonable doubt, then you must find the defendant not guilty of being an unlawful user of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

The term “firearm” means any weapon which will or is designed to or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

You are instructed as a matter of law that marijuana is a Schedule I controlled substance.

You must ascertain whether or not the substance in question in the Indictment was marijuana. In so doing, you may consider all the evidence in this case which may aid in the determination of that issue.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER ____

The law recognizes several kinds of possession. A person may have actual possession or constructive possession. A person may have sole or joint possession.

A person who knowingly has direct physical control over a thing, at a given time, is then in “actual possession” of it.

A person who, although not in actual possession, knowingly has both the power and intention at a given time to exercise dominion or control over a thing, either directly or through another person or persons, is then in “constructive possession” of it.

If one person alone has actual or constructive possession of a thing, possession is “sole.” If two or more persons share actual or constructive possession of a thing, possession is “joint.”

Whenever the word “possession” has been used in these instructions it includes “actual” as well as “constructive” possession and also “sole” as well as “joint” possession.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER ____

You will note that the Indictment charges that the two alternatives of the criminal offense were committed “on or about” a certain date. The government need not prove with certainty the exact date or the exact time period of the offense charged. It is sufficient if the evidence established that the offense occurred within a reasonable time of the date or period of time alleged in the Indictment.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

A reasonable doubt is a doubt based upon reason and common sense, and not the mere possibility of innocence. A reasonable doubt is the kind of doubt that would make a reasonable person hesitate to act. Proof beyond a reasonable doubt, therefore, must be proof of such a convincing character that a reasonable person would not hesitate to rely and act upon it. However, proof beyond a reasonable doubt does not mean proof beyond all possible doubt.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

An act is done “knowingly” if the defendant realized what he was doing and did not act through ignorance, mistake or accident. The government is not required to prove that the defendant knew that his acts or omissions were unlawful. You may consider the evidence of the defendant’s acts and words, along with all other evidence, in deciding whether the defendant acted knowingly.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

Intent may be proven by circumstantial evidence. It rarely can be established by other means. While witnesses may see or hear and thus be able to give direct evidence of what a person does or fails to do, there can be no eyewitness account of the state of mind with which the acts were done or omitted. But what a defendant does or fails to do may indicate intent or lack of intent to commit an offense.

You may consider it reasonable to draw the inference and find that a person intends the natural and probable consequences of acts knowingly done, but you are not required to do so. As I have previously mentioned, it is entirely up to you to decide what facts to find from the evidence.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER ____

It is not necessary for the government to prove the defendant knew the firearms charged in the Indictment had traveled in interstate commerce, the defendant personally transported the firearms in interstate commerce or the defendant intended to violate a particular statute. Likewise, it is not necessary for the government to prove the defendant knew it was illegal to have the firearms in his possession within the meaning of the law. Further, it is not necessary for the government to prove who owned the firearms at any time. The statute involved speaks in terms of possession, not ownership.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

Throughout the trial, you have been permitted to take notes. Your notes should be used only as memory aids, and you should not give your notes precedence over your independent recollection of the evidence.

In any conflict between your notes, a fellow juror's notes and your memory, your memory must prevail. Remember that notes sometimes contain the mental impressions of the note taker and can be used only to help you recollect what the testimony was. At the conclusion of your deliberations, your notes should be left in the jury room for destruction.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

In conducting your deliberations and returning your verdict, there are certain rules you must follow. I shall list those rules for you now.

First, when you go to the jury room, you must select one of your members as your foreperson. That person will preside over your discussions and speak for you here in court.

Second, it is your duty, as jurors, to discuss this case with one another in the jury room. You should try to reach an agreement if you can do so without violence to individual judgment, because a verdict—whether guilty or not guilty—must be unanimous.

Each of you must make your own conscientious decision, but only after you have considered all the evidence, discussed it fully with your fellow jurors and listened to the views of your fellow jurors.

Do not be afraid to change your opinions if the discussion persuades you that you should. But do not come to a decision simply because other jurors think it is right or simply to reach a verdict.

Third, if the defendant is found guilty, the sentence to be imposed is my responsibility. You may not consider punishment in any way in deciding whether the government has proved its case beyond a reasonable doubt.

(CONTINUED)

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____ (Cont'd)

Fourth, if you need to communicate with me during your deliberations, you may send a note to me through the marshal or court security officer, signed by one or more jurors. I will respond as soon as possible either in writing or orally in open court. Remember that you should not tell anyone—including me—how your votes stand numerically.

Finally, your verdict must be based solely on the evidence and on the law which I have given to you in my instructions. The verdict, whether guilty or not guilty, must be unanimous. Nothing I have said or done is intended to suggest what your verdict should be—that is entirely for you to decide.

INSTRUCTION NUMBER _____

Attached to these instructions you will find a Verdict Form and an Interrogatory. These are simply the written notice of the decisions that you reach in this case. The answers to the Verdict Form and Interrogatory must be the unanimous decisions of the jury.

You will take the Verdict Form and Interrogatory to the jury room, and when you have completed your deliberations and each of you has agreed on answers to the Verdict Form and Interrogatory, your foreperson will fill out the Verdict Form and Interrogatory, sign and date them and advise the marshal or court security officer that you are ready to return to the courtroom.

Finally, members of the jury, take this case and give it your most careful consideration, and then without fear or favor, prejudice or bias of any kind, return such verdict as accords with the evidence and these instructions.

DATE

**LINDA R. READE
JUDGE, U. S. DISTRICT COURT**

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA
EASTERN DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

KENT RAYMOND PLATTER,

Defendant.

No. CR 06-2012-LRR

**VERDICT FORM -
ALTERNATIVE I**

We, the Jury, find the defendant, Kent Raymond Platter, _____
Not Guilty / Guilty
of possessing a firearm after having been previously convicted of a felony offense, as
charged in the Indictment.

Note: If you unanimously and beyond a reasonable doubt find the defendant guilty of Alternative I, have your foreperson write “guilty” in the above blank space and sign and date the Verdict Form and go on to consider Alternative II.

If you unanimously find the defendant not guilty of Alternative I, have your foreperson write “not guilty” in the above blank space and sign and date the Verdict Form and go on to consider Alternative II.

FOREPERSON

DATE

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA
EASTERN DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

KENT RAYMOND PLATTER,

Defendant.

No. CR 06-2012-LRR

**VERDICT FORM -
ALTERNATIVE II**

We, the Jury, find the defendant, Kent Raymond Platter, _____
Not Guilty / Guilty
of possessing a firearm while being an unlawful user of a controlled substance, as charged
in the Indictment.

Note: If you unanimously and beyond a reasonable doubt find the defendant guilty of Alternative II, have your foreperson write "guilty" in the above blank space and sign and date the Verdict Form and go on to consider the Interrogatory.

If you unanimously find the defendant not guilty of Alternative II, have your foreperson write "not guilty" in the above blank space and sign and date the Verdict Form and go on to consider the Interrogatory.

FOREPERSON

DATE

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA
EASTERN DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

KENT RAYMOND PLATTER,

Defendant.

No. CR 06-2012-LRR

INTERROGATORY

If you unanimously found, beyond a reasonable doubt, the defendant guilty of possession of a firearm after being convicted of a felony and/or possession of a firearm while being an unlawful user of a controlled substance as charged in the Indictment, please answer and sign and date the Interrogatory.

Interrogatory 1: Place a (√) mark beside the firearm or firearms that you unanimously find, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the defendant possessed:

_____ a Marlin, Model 60, .22 caliber rifle, bearing
serial number 13429138

_____ a New England Arms Company, Model SB1, 20
gauge shotgun, bearing serial number NK425469

FOREPERSON

DATE